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IMPORTANT POINTS OF 1953 PROGRAM
OF THE CHINESE MINISTRY OF LABOR

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[The five key-points of the 1953 program of the Ministry of Labor were outlined in an article entitled "Important Points of the 1953 Program of the Ministry of Labor" which was originally published in the Shanghai Lao-tung, No 3, 1953.]

The two fundamental prerequisites for large-scale economic construction during 1953 are satisfactory basic construction work and the guaranteed completion of national production plans. During the concentration on large-scale economic development, certain privately operated enterprises which are not beneficial to the planned national economy will be progressively weeded out. Problems of temporary unemployment, changing jobs, and the adjustment of labor-management relations will arise from this situation. To solve these problems, the Ministry of Labor plans the following five-point program.

1. To assure the completion of capital construction plans, consideration will be given to the welfare of construction workers who constitute an important force in economic development. To avoid the present condition, where work is begun in one factory after another and completed in none, the placement and allocation of labor must be centralized. A study of practicable safety and health measures and facilities for construction projects should be made. The administration of safety and sanitary measures in basic construction work and the administration of labor insurance regulations should be checked; also, workers collective contracts and labor contracts should be studied and broadened.
2. The problems of training skilled workers will be studied to meet the demands of capital construction and of new factories and mines for technicians. For a time, the industrial ministries themselves will continue to be responsible for training technicians, but the over-all supervision of the training program is the responsibility of the Ministry of Labor. The Ministry of Labor will coordinate all the technical training activities of the industrial ministries and will study the training methods, standards, and teaching materials of the various ministries. The Ministry of Labor will propose standards, such as the preferential treatment of students, and will supply the various ministries with trainees. Labor bureaus throughout the country must broaden and reorganize training classes for the unemployed in order to fit them for other occupations. Private supplementary vocational schools must be registered and reorganized to expedite the training and supplying of technical workers and personnel to the ministries.

Regarding the centralized allocation of technical workers, the following preparatory work can be carried out this year: (a) In collaboration with the State Statistical Bureau, the Ministry of Labor will make a report on the number and distribution of technical workers. (b) In collaboration with the Wage Office of the Committee of Finance and Economics, the Ministry of Labor will set up standards for the classification of some of the important types of industrial technicians and the methods for testing workers to determine their grade classification. The Ministry of Labor will also study the problem of labor force quotas. For these reasons the first special conference will be called in March to discuss the allocation of the labor force.

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3. The third important problem to be emphasized is that of labor safety and labor insurance. Illness among workers and the number of deaths from injury must be reduced in order to raise the production rate. Therefore, the single most important task for 1953 is to carry out the decision adopted by the All-China Labor Safety Conference held in December 1952. There will be an investigation of the administration of labor insurance regulations. Special attention should be focused on establishing and broadening group insurance, and on lessening the illness rate of workers. In collaboration with the Ministry of Public Health there will be a conference on public health work in factories and mines and a study of the most serious occupational diseases and methods of preventing tuberculosis.

4. The next important problem is that of readjusting labor-management relations. There must be a plan to readjust gradually labor-management relations and working hours, either by collective contracts or by government regulation. To reform the existing laws, labor consultative conferences must be expanded, and collective contracts must be established. Studies must be made on how to differentiate the independent producer and his apprentices from capital and labor and the attitudes governing the relations of apprentices to masters. The treatment of apprentices must be regulated, and apprentice-master contracts set up to reduce present labor-management disputes. The first All-China Labor Bureau Directors Conference will be held this summer to discuss labor-management relations.

5. The final important problem is that of the unemployed worker. Some groups of the unemployed can enter either construction work or construction repair work. The retraining of the unemployed who seek employment in new occupations must be based on the needs of production. Individual contracts must be signed before training is begun to assure the graduates of definite positions. Able-bodied persons who are unable to find employment will be given relief benefits in exchange for labor. Those persons who are unable to work will be given relief but under a different system. Persons who are unemployed but who have prospects of work and some outside source of income should be reassured and encouraged to wait.

The first persons among the unemployed to be considered should be those who lost their positions during the Five-Antis Movement.

In conclusion, the Ministry of Labor, the Labor departments of the administrative areas, and the labor bureaus of industrial cities are urged to follow these plans for 1953.

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